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**April 11, 2003  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COLUMBIAN PESO BROKER AND U.S. MONEY LAUNDERER  
SENTENCED IN INTERNATIONAL MONEY LAUNDERING SCHEME**

**Baltimore, Maryland** -Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that Carlos Jaime Ruiz-Duque, a 41 year old resident of Cali, Colombia was sentenced to 9 years in prison for laundering drug proceeds for Colombian drug traffickers. Marlene Zamorano, a 57 year old illegal alien from Colombia, South America who was a money launderer working with Ruiz-Duque, was sentenced to 9 years in prison on March 27, 2003.

According to the plea agreements previously presented to the court, between April 28, 2000 and January 24, 2002, Ruiz-Duque hired a U.S. Customs Service undercover agent to pick up a total of \$4,467,491 of U.S. currency drug proceeds on 12 occasions in various U.S. cities. On three of those occasions, Zamorano delivered the drug proceeds to the undercover agent.

Following the pick-ups, undercover agents were instructed to deposit the drug proceeds into bank accounts in Baltimore, Maryland. Ruiz-Duque would then instruct undercover agents to wire transfer the drug proceeds to third party bank accounts of individuals and businesses in

the United States and abroad. Large amounts of drug proceeds were wired at the direction of Ruiz-Duque to U.S. businesses to pay for commercial goods subsequently exported to Colombia, South America. This method of laundering drug money is known as the Black Market Peso Exchange.

As part of this 4 year investigation, seizure warrants were executed on 34 domestic bank accounts and \$830,949 was seized. In addition, 5 other individuals were arrested and law enforcement officers seized \$5,183,117 in U.S. currency, 12.8 pounds of heroin and 14 kilograms of cocaine.

This case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security, Customs Investigations Division, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, and the Baltimore City Police Department. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Lisa Griffin.